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DISSERTATION

ON THE

BOOK of *JOB*,
1009. d. 5.
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ITS NATURE, ARGUMENT, AGE, and AUTHOR.

Wherein the celebrated Text, Ch. xix. 25.

I know that my redeemer liveth, &c.

Is occasionally CONSIDERED, and DISCUSSED.

To which is prefixed

AN INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE, with a short
ANALYSIS of the whole Book.

Quis nescit poetis historiam esse pro argumento, quam illi aut adumbratam, aut illustratam, certe aliâ facie quum ostendunt, ex historiâ conficiunt poema? Quid enim aliud Homerus? Quid ipsis Tragicis faciemus? SCALIGER.
Ainsi lorsqu'on dira, que l'auteur de ce livre peut avoir vécu au commencement de la captivité; on ne dira rien, qui ne soit assez vraisemblable, & qui ne soit conforme de style de cette ouvrage. Sentimens de quelques Theol. Holl.

THE SECOND EDITION.

By JOHN GARNETT, B. D.

Lady Margaret's Preacher in the University of Cambridge.

Now Lord Bishop of Ferns and Leighlin.

LONDON, Printed for M. COOPER, at the *Globe*, in *Pater-noster-Row*.
MDCCLIV.

DISSERTATION

ON THE

BOOK OF JOB.

IN NATURE, AGREEMENT, AND AUTHOR.

I know that my Redeemer liveth: &c.

Is occasionally Comprehended.

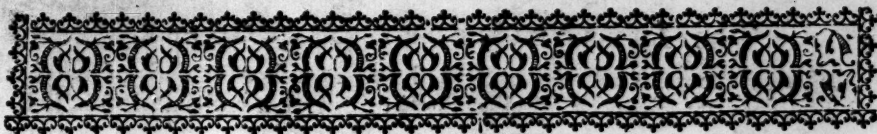


ANALYSIS OF THE WHOLE BOOK.

By JOHN GARRETT, B.D.
Fellow of the University of Cambridge.

LONDON: Printed by J. GARRATT, in the Strand, 1791.

MDCCXCVI.



T H E

Introductory Discourse.

WHEN I first published this dissertation, it was more than intimated, that the Book of Job was a drama, composed upon forensic principles, or a work of imagination, drawn up somewhat in the form, and manner, of a trial at bar; that Job was impeached by the three advocates, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, who, as well as Job himself, appeared in no other character, than proxies for other persons, and that the whole composition was plainly of this kind, conducted throughout in a popular harangue, they collecting together every thing, which imagination could suggest, or eloquence refine upon, to impeach him of the highest crimes, he pursuing the same plan, to acquit himself of the charge against him.

It was hinted at the same time, that I was then preparing an analysis of the whole book, to make good this hypothesis, and since the publication of the dissertation, this has employed much of my attention. I have seen, and read, some pieces, that have made their appearance since, upon a very different plan, and confess, have found no reason yet to alter my opinion, either of the nature and structure of the performance, or of its scope and argument. The very latest writers give up, what indeed there is no maintaining, that perfect character of patience in Job, which it had been the business of ages to contend for, or was rather the whole run of antiquity, to take for granted.

This, I apprehend, is the leading clue to any fair solution of this performance; for if Job be not at last the perfect model of patience, upon the face of it, which he has passed for, if the very reverse of this be, as we say, his dramatic character, querulous, impatient, nay and blasphemous, recourse must be had to some other, than historic principles, to account for his justification, and acquittal, at the conclusion of his trial. Those principles are suggested in the body of the dissertation, and what I have now to add is, not so much in vindication of either the allegory, or the argument, as to establish the notion, inculcated, of a personated character,

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throughout

throughout the whole book, and to shew, by a short analysis of it, that the whole debate is conducted all along, in form of a judicial process, instituted against Job, and supported by the three friends, only as so many advocates, and not in proper character.

To form a right judgement of a work, thus conducted, it was plain, at first sight, that little light was to be got from the comments, or the expositions, of either meer critics or divines. If there were any commentators to be found, that to these accomplishments, had added a competent share of the antient jurisprudence, from that quarter, it might be hoped, some information was to be come at. Schultens had advanced the farthest, and criticised the text, most conformably to the forensic notion, of any author, that had yet fallen in my way, but unfortunately, had confounded the forensic with agonistic terms, sometimes considering Job entering the lists with the three friends, and those again with him, as so many combatants, at others, more properly, as advocates.

At last, in that crowd of commentators, which has oppressed this, more than any other book of scripture, Monsieur Mercier, a french critic, presented himself, whom, for the forensic materials of the book before us, I would recommend to the perusal of those, more immediately concerned in the examination of it; an author, singularly well qualified for the task, he sate down to, because singularly accomplished in those two branches of literature, which lead to a right acquaintance with it, the hebrew language, and the civil law, of which, we see so happy an application made, in the very last edition of this book *.

Upon the authority of these two authors, what I first hazarded with the publick, as a conjecture of my own, I shall venture now to establish, as the true, and proper, notion of the performance under consideration. Indeed I owe so much to some persons, of equal candor and learning, with whom I live in confidence, and who have freely communicated to me their doubts upon this single point, and have a right therefore to be satisfied. I was not so sanguine, as to conceive any expectation, that the publick would fall in at once with so novel a theory, as my book presented, and so prepared myself to make good, from the authority of great names, that grand arbiter of the publick's judgement, what from a private hand might well be doubted.

In B. II. §. 4. some advances are made, upon the authority of the antient Targums, of Codurc, Drusius, Selden, Hammond, and Schultens, to prove, that the characters of the several disputants are assumed, and not proper ones, of advocates and proxies, and not of the parties interested; that they plead, argue, and dispute, like so many declaimers, and orators, and maintain a cause, on each side, which belonged, in person, to neither of them; that the *accepting of persons; speaking for God; pleading for God*;

* Liber Job. ex editione Ric. Grey. S. T. P. 1742.

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contending for God ; being in God's stead ; being mockers ; are so many forensic terms, and imply their being only so many advocates^a.

And thus my critic considers them. To that text, *my friends are my mockers*, he gives the very turn, we contend for, " my pleaders, my declamers, flourish at me all their rhetorick, deal in studied, and pointed sentences, and affect all the flowers of eloquence, to provoke, and inflame me^b." To that other passage, *as one mocketh a man, do ye so mock God ? he will surely reprove you, if ye do secretly accept persons*, he gives the same. " Is it right in you to play the part of God ? no, he can best defend his own cause, there is no necessity, that you should be his advocates, or pleaders, he has need of no such grimace and artifice^c."

If any one can be supposed to understand the true state of the case with them, one would think, Elihu, the moderator in the dispute, the person in God's stead, should do it. Yet, as it has been already suggested, he charges Job with *his answers for wicked men^d*, with assuming the character of wicked men, and speaking under it. He charges him, in so many words, with grimace through his whole part, *yea thou castest out fear, and restrainest prayer before God, for thy mouth uttereth iniquity, and thou chooseth the tongue of the crafty^e*. So too he objects the same grimace to the part, the three friends were acting, *Behold I gave ear to your reasons, I waited for your words, whilst you searched out what to say^f*.

Schultens translates the last words, " whilst you employed all your subtilty, all your invention, mustered up all your genius, to express your sentiments in the exactest manner^g." But Mercier descends stills deeper into the sense of the passage, and expounds them, " whilst you collected together your whole apparatus," for so some copies render the words, i. e. " whilst, like professed orators, you brought your arguments together from all quarters, with all the parade and pomp, all the elaborate ostentation of science, rather to shew your own parts and learning, than to make good your point^h."

The whole of his reproof turns, we see, not upon the hypocrisy of the respective parties in the dispute, considered in the moral view, but upon the address they practised, in the management of it, that the parts, they were playing, were feigned and not real ones, that they no more spoke the language of their hearts, than Job did, but were espousing the cause

^a Dissert. p. 241. ^b Mes Rhetoriqueurs, qui tournez toute votre rhetorique contre moi, et vous etudiez a bien dire, et chercher des couleurs de rhetorique pour me piquer. Mercer. Comm. in Lib. Job. ^c Estne par vobis Dei causam agere ? Minime vero. Ipse se satis defendet. Nihil necesse est, ut ei patroni sitis et advocati. Putatisne fore, ut ei os oblinatis, et verba detis, ut homo solet homini. Nec ille his nugis eget aut strophis. Mercer.

^d Dissert. p. 240. ^e Ch. xv. 2. ^f xxii. 11. ^g Aurem præbui ad intelligentias vestras, usque dum sermones subtilius scrutaremini. i. e. dum omnem vim ingenii et intelligentiæ vestræ explicassetis, omnia quam exactissime ventilassetis. Schult.

^h Totus eram in auscultando argumentis, quibus peritiâ et doctrinam nitebamini ostendere. Apparatus vestro, i. e. argumentis cum summo apparatu, hinc inde undequaque conquisitis. Selectis enim verbis et exquisitis usi sunt rationibus. Mercer.

of virtue, just as Job was renouncing it, for some particular purpose. To let them see, that this was the case with them, he puts his own character, the part he was going to act, in comparison with theirs, and asserts the simplicity, and ingenuity of it, in direct contradistinction to them.

It is amazing to observe, how, guarded as this character of Elihu's is, by every distinction, that could claim reverence to it; by his asserting inspiration; by his professing, at the very first setting out, that he was in God's stead; and by that superior air of majesty; that candor and dignity; which runs through the whole of it, it should ever have been mistaken so egregiously, as we find it. From Theodore of Mopsueste, down to Codurc and Calmet, he has been represented as the most vain, futil, bombast speaker in the whole debate, and later writers of our own have not scrupled to charge him with weakness, and passion, alledging, in great tenderness, so simple an excuse for him, as his youth; an excuse, that does as little honor to their sagacity, as to his conduct. Let but Job be the perfect, and upright man, after their own heart, no matter, what becomes of one of God's prophets.

Simplicity, and ingenuity, were what he laid claim to, in opposition to the grimace, and address, of the other speakers. He disclaims expressly, and his part required it, any such personating the characters of men, as they had been practising. The part, he was going upon, was the part of God himself; he was to speak the language, assert the authority, and support the dignity, of God's prophet; to reprove, admonish, applaud, or censure, the several pleaders in the cause, just as he found occasion, and to fit a kind of deputy in it to the supreme judge.

Thus therefore he opens his commission. First, he puts in his claim to inspiration, to command their reverence, and attention. Next, he distinguishes between his part, and theirs, and asserts his superiority over them in that respect. They had been acting the part of man, or pleading, as it is elsewhere expressed, *as a man pleadeth with his neighbour*. He desires to be heard in a different capacity. *Let me not I pray you, accept any man's person, neither let me give flattering titles to man, for I know not how to give flattering titles, my maker would soon take me away*¹.

The, *accepting mens persons*, is a phrase; for the explaining of which, I must refer the reader to p. 240, where it is shewn to mean no more, than personating the characters of men. Indeed this is the literal sense of the words, and whenever they are used, as they sometimes are in scripture, for *being partial*, or *having respect to persons*, it is certainly in the figurative, and not in the literal sense; and the figure itself is borrowed from the literal notion, of *taking a man's person upon one's-self*. Thus, *inducere, sustinere personas*, among the Latins. This is the primary sense of the words. The secondary is, to support such a character, as belongs to those persons, to grow partial to it, and make it our own. The forensic sense of the words is, to take up, and lay down, occasionally, such and such qualities, in such and such a cause, as belong properly to it †.

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¹ Ch. xxxii. 21.

† Suscipere personam, et deponere, i. e. accipere qualitatem in

That it is the primary sense, that the passage, under consideration, is to be taken in, appears from what follows. *Neither let me give flattering titles to men.* The words are ill translated, and the restoring them to their proper meaning, will both ascertain Elihu's and the other characters. KANAH, *give flattering titles*, is rendered by Schultens, *circumloqui*, to use circumlocution in speaking; and this comes still nearer the general charge of address and artifice, of pomp and parade, in the manner of conducting the debate, like so many orators or declaimers, on the side of the two contending parties.

But, if my critic be right, the more precise notion of the word is, *mutato nomine loqui*, to speak under some other name, or person, instead of calling every one by his own proper name, making use of occult terms, instead of addressing the discourse directly, and ingenuously, at the person it is designed for, and no other; employing art, and circumlocution, in speaking to him^k. And this coincides exactly with Job's own charge against the three friends. *They have dealt deceitfully*, have prevaricated, feigned, dissembled, been acting a part, *with me*.

If this be the genuine sense of the words, it will be seen, in case it reflect any farther light upon this character of Elihu, and is found to fall in with those pretensions to sincerity and ingenuity, in his manner of speaking, which he asserts in contradiction to theirs; for thus he proceeds. *Behold now have I opened my mouth, my tongue hath spoken in my palate, my words shall be of the uprightness of my heart, my lips shall utter knowledge clearly*^l. Here the language of the heart, is directly opposed to the language of the lips; the honesty of the one asserted, in distinction to the insincerity of the other. BARUR, *clearly*, Schultens renders, *purum, expurgatum*, and explains it into simplicity, and perspicuity. My critic improves upon it, and adds, *a fuso alienum, ab omni scorio mendacii, aut doli, purgatum & mendatum*, void of all coloring and disguise, clear of all the refuse of dissimulation and artifice.

There cannot be a stronger text in point, than where Elihu, still insisting upon the simplicity of his part, adds. *Truly my words shall not be false, like yours; he that is perfect in knowledge is with thee.* SHAKAR, *false*, signifies a lie, in the strict sense of the word, and so we find it used by Job, where he calls the three friends *forgers of lies*; but Schultens has criticised both the texts, and instead of SHAKAR, a lie, reads SAKAR, *fusus*,

in causâ, et relinquere postea. Et personæ controversiæ interdum controversæ sunt inter litigatores, et pronuntiatur personæ constitutum iri ex iis, quæ ab apparitore acta sunt, et renuntiata. Quod sermone forensi dicunt. Budeus. Forens. p. 65.

Ego defenforem, in meâ personâ, maximè laudari volo, i. e. volo videri egregie fungi defensoris partibus, in meâ personâ, i. e. in meo munere et officio, quod suscepi. Cic.

^k Id significat verbum KANAH, occulte aliquem designare, cognominare, titulis et testis verbis, loco nominis proprii, uti; per ambages aliquid dicere, quod simpliciter dici non poterat, vitandi odii, vel benevolentia captandæ, gratiæ. — Proponit rationem, quâ sit acturus inter loquendum, se aperte, diserte rem, uti est, tractaturum, non testis verbis, ut alii quos hic arguit. Mercer.

^l Ch. xxxiii. 3.

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a false coloring^a, what Tully calls *pigmenta oratoria*; and the very minute difference, in dropping a single point, justifies his reading. The sense of the passage will then be, "my words shall not be as yours have been, painted over with the plausible varnish, the false colorings of rhetoric; God, who is perfect in understanding, and knoweth man's heart, sees through it."

There are but two passages more, amidst a number of minuter ones, that I shall lay any farther stress upon, to make good this matter. One, where Job complains, *these ten times have ye reproached me; ye are not ashamed, that ye make yourselves strange to me*^b. The critics are divided about the exact meaning of the word, HAKAR, *make strange*: some of them render it, are obstinate, perverse, against me. Others, more properly, foreign, aliens, strangers to me, *i. e.* are acting a part strange, and foreign, as you make it, to your real character. The other; *how then comfort ye me, seeing in your answer remaineth falsehood*^c, or, as almost all the critics render it, prevarication, dissimulation.

From all which places, it appears, I think, indisputably, that the prevarication and hypocrisy, the fraud and mockery, the lies and forgeries, which the contending parties charge alternately upon each other, are not in general to be understood, so much of the moral characters of the parties, though this may sometimes be the case with them, as of the art and management of the dispute, that it is the personated character, that is intended to be exposed by such expressions, and not the moral ones, and that Job, and the three friends, appear throughout the whole debate, in no other capacity, than that of so many pleaders, or advocates, in personated character, all along, and not in proper one.

And so much for the personated characters. We come now to see the use, that is made of them; to shew, that under this notion of pleaders, or advocates, they enter upon their province; that the three friends take one side of the argument, and Job the other; that Job is impleaded at the bar, and the three friends are his accusers; and that the whole performance, which we call the book of Job, is conducted throughout, in form of a judicial process, or criminal cause, and not of any set argument, or debate upon a disputable problem.

Ch. iii. Which is, properly speaking, the first opening of the cause, or of, what we have elsewhere called, the dramatic part, sets out with Job blaspheming, as Satan had engaged he would, and cursing the day of his birth. This gives handle to the three friends; to open the charge against him, and to implead him in form.

Ch. iv. Eliphaz, the Temanite, opens the indictment against Job, first with an indirect insinuation of his being an hypocrite, and dissembler with God; next, with a direct charge upon him of impatience and impiety.

^a Non fucus sermones mei. Fucato oratori opponitur integer scientiis, *i. e.* sincerus. SAKAR. color ruber. mox fucatus. Ad pigmenta oratoria etiam traduci se patitur. Non calidus te circumveniam, sed veritati indaganda unice insistam. Schult.

^b Ch. xix. 3.

^c Ib. xxi. 34.

Eliphaz here, as Schultens observes, "takes upon him to plead the part of God, and not his own, though it looks like it, and inveighs against him with great vehemence *."

Ch. v. The court opens in form, and Job is called upon to plead to the indictment. *Call now, if there be any that will answer thee*, i. e. defend thee, *and to which of the saints wilt thou turn?* The two words, KARAH, *call*, and HANAH, *answer*, are used in their proper forensic sense, as they are through the whole book, for calling into court, and speaking to the character of the person accused, and are a challenge, as it were to Job, to produce either men, or angels, to speak in his defence. And thus both Schultens, and Mercier, criticise them †.

Ch. vi. vii. Job remonstrates to the charge, by representing to them the inhumanity of their proceedings against him, and by laying before the court, the extreme distress, and undeserved calamity, of his situation. Galled with Eliphaz's charge upon him, he flies out into bitter complaints of the three friends, and indecent expostulations with God, as capriciously afflicting him, then repeats, in the most sanguine and irreverent manner, his wishes to die, and to be delivered from his afflictions.

Ch. viii. Bildad, the Shuhite, takes up the same charge against Job, and concludes, in general terms, his guilt from his sufferings, reproving him for his indecent expostulations with God, and endeavouring to convince him of the justice and equity of providence, which, whatever men may sometimes think of it, cannot pervert judgement. This softens Job, and he begins to relent.

Ch. ix. He sees, and confesses, the impropriety of contending with his maker, acknowledges the infinite distance between them, and seems resolved to submit to whatever he shall please to inflict. Yet,

Ch. x. He flies out again into the same freedom of expostulation, and able no longer to smother his indignation, declares, he will give it full vent, and speak in all the bitterness of his soul; that he will call upon God himself, and demand of him his reasons, for bringing him thus to shame. And he does it with that petulancy, and freedom, which he engaged for.

Ch. xi. Zophar, the Naamathite, takes him to task, for his dealing thus freely with God, and charges him with sawciness, rashness, and impiety, for his calling upon God in such a manner; wishes that God would, as he desired, litigate the point with him, reason with him upon the subject of his sufferings, and then he would soon see, that less was inflicted upon him, than he had deserved. In the mean time, that absolute submission, and resignation, were the best lesson for him.

* Dei causam acturus, ut opinabatur, nec suam sane, ut ferme fit, in arenam descendit Eliphaz. Arg. in ch. iv.

† KARAH. clamavit. HANAH. respondit. induunt vim judicalem. q. d. voca. age. periculum fac, si lubet, novæ cum Deo contentionis, advoca causæ tuæ defensores, seu erit homo, seu angelus. Schult.

Ch. xii. xiii. Dissatisfied with the proceedings against him, before Elihu, Job comes to the very point, which he had been aiming at all along, to take the cause out of their hands, and carry it up to a higher tribunal. He tells the three friends, he had heard their whole accusation, and thus far had submitted to it, but that now he should lodge his appeal with God himself, and dispute the matter of his innocence with him; that he would plead his own cause before him, and aver the injustice of his sufferings; that what they had been arguing all along, as advocates for God, he would soon shew them, they were mistaken in.

He was now prepared in form for the trial. *Behold now I have ordered my cause, I know that I shall be justified. Who is he that will litigate the matter with me? For now if I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost.* Then in plain terms, he gives God his option to plead, either as prosecutor or defendant*; and ready to answer all objections, he demands, why he is so wretchedly afflicted? dealing, as Mercier observes, too familiarly and audaciously with God, as if he could not, if he thought proper, alledge many just reasons for it.

There were but two favors, previous to his tryal before God himself, that he would ask, and then he would come intrepid to it; one, that *God would withdraw his hand from him*; the other, that *his dread should not make him afraid*. Remove but these two obstacles, and leave him at full liberty to offer what he had to say, in his own defence, he would speak, as he does, loudly and openly, and neither dissemble the opinion, he entertained of God's proceedings with him, nor despair of vindicating his innocence, in the most solemn and public manner†.

Ch. xiv. He complains heavily of the impeachment, brought against him by the three friends, that so frail a creature, as man, should be thus brought up to the bar of judgement by them; that God had *written bitter things against him, i. e.* had libelled him for high crimes; *that his transgressions were sealed in a bag, i. e.* the instrument of his impeachment brought into court, in the advocate's bag, to be produced as evidence against him‖. Still, though he could not submit to their impeachment, before Elihu, yet he was ready to take his tryal, before God, and if God would call upon him, in a judicial way, he was ready to answer him.

* Optionem ei dat, ut aut actoris aut rei, personam delegat, paratus ad quodvis obiectum respondendum. Vult sibi causam aperiri, cur ita affligatur priusquam condemnatur, familiarius atque audacius cum Deo agens, quasi non potuisset, si ex lege agere voluisset, afferre permulta, ob quæ esset affligendus. Mercer.

† Ostendit se non postulare amplius, quam ut majestatem suam seponat Deus, in congressum descendens cum mortali homine, et se vel ad tribunal suum ascendere paratum. Schult.

Nempe id quod c. ix. postulatum fuerat, nunc animosius liberiusque urgetur, atque a nostro in congressum cum numine, γυνη τη κεφαλη, descenditur, idque non sine gravi excessu. Arg.

Jam cum Deo disceptaturus duo a se amoveri vult, plagam et majestatem, quæ cum ita perterrefecerant, ut suas non audeat rationes eloqui. Hoc si facias, non timebo loqui, intrepide coram te comparebo, et causam meam agam. Mercer.

‖ Dissert. p. 190. Boldaque Comment. in loc.

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Ch. xv. Eliphaz remonstrates to him the indecency, and irreverence of such an appeal, as he had been making to God, and of his calling him so impudently into court; tells him, he was now arrived at the highest pitch of insolence, had given up all reverence for his maker, and *restrained prayer before God*, that he had not treated him with the ordinary respect due to a judge, and that his own mouth, and not he, had convicted him of the greatest impiety.

Ch. xvi. Job gives full vent to his despondency, and, in downright terms, charges God with cruelty, and injustice, with heaping upon him calamity upon calamity, unprovoked and undeserved, with making him the tool of his resentments, and sporting with his misery. Then he returns to the old challenge, and demands a personal conference, and tryal before him.

Ch. xvii. He proceeds to a downright demand upon God, to join issue with him upon the indictment. *Lay down now, put in a pledge, who is he that will strike hands with me?* This was the form, of old, of joining issue in causes; the two parties struck their hands together, by way of entering into a recognizance, or giving security¹. Now therefore he stakes the whole credit, of his cause, upon the defense, he undertakes to make, before God, and puts his conviction, or acquittal, upon that single footing.

Ch. xviii. Bildad, greatly provoked at the boldness, and confidence, of this measure, replies to him; accuses him of dissingenuity and insolence, and infers his guilt from his confidence.

Ch. xix. Job persists in the old complaint, of his being most inhumanly treated by God, without the least demerit, or fault, on his side. Then demands again, that a libel, in form, be preferred against him, and a public notary employed to take down his defense². Then he expresses his confidence in the strongest terms, that God would make his personal appearance in open court, that at last he should see him, as his redeemer, and deliverer from all his persecutions.

Ch. xx. Zophar returns to the old charge upon him, and only observes in general, that it is impossible, that any one should be so severely afflicted, as he, who had not given some occasion, or other, for it by his sins.

Ch. xxi. To this Job objects, how untrue the observation is, in fact, and how inconclusive all such reasoning; for that the good, and bad, share alike the happiness, and misery, of this world, and neither from their deaths, nor their lives, can any inference be drawn with certainty.

¹ HORR. sponde fide-jube. complosa manu, ut mos est in fide-jussionibus. Stipulare mihi. Drus.

² Intelligit librum publicum, in quo acta publica notabantur, a scribis civitatum, in eorum tabulis reponenda. Schult.

Velim a parte Dei instrumentum litis, et accusationis meae summam conscribi, et in judicium adversus me preferri in libello. Id. in v. 23.

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Ch. xxii. Eliphaz reproves him once more, for his calling God to judgement upon him, and argues, how unequal Job was to stand such a tryal, he, whom he accuses of abjectness and meanness, of rapine and extortion; of uncharitableness and inhumanity. Then exhorts him to repentance, as the only means of averting the just judgements of God, and being restored again to the divine favor.

Ch. xxiii. xxiv. Exasperated at so round a charge upon him, Job no longer contains himself. Not content with the demand, he had so oft, and so insolently repeated, of ordering his cause before God, he expresses his impatience to find him out, to come even unto his seat; complains, that God avoided the interview; that it was denied him to see God, and reason with him upon his case; that, were a fight of God but once indulged him, he would order his cause, in form, before him, would fill his mouth with arguments; would answer to every thing, he had to object to him¹. If this be not insolence, and presumption, if setting God at open defiance be not blasphemy; what is?

Ch. xxv. Bildad closes the pleadings, on the side of the prosecutors, with just observing, how impertinent, and insolent, Job's defense had all along been, in resting the merits of his cause upon an appeal to God; for what was man; what was the best of men, that he could presume to justify himself before God?

Ch. xxvi. xxvii. xxviii. xxix. xxx. xxxi. contain Job's replication to the prosecutor's charge, and are a labored recapitulation of what he had offered, in the course of his defense; he persists still in his complaint, that *God had taken away his judgement*, had denied him that access, and precluded him that appeal to his tribunal, which he had demanded. After the most solemn asseverations of his innocence, and of his resolutions to persist in it, he harangues at large upon the justice, and goodness of God, and then concludes with the old demand upon him, to give him the hearing in person.

For thus he speaks. *O that one would bear me; behold my desire is, that the Almighty would answer me, and that mine adversary had written a book.* ISH RIBI. *adversarius meus. litigator. actor.* my prosecutor, my impleader, *i. e.* Would to God, that he himself would vouchsafe to implead me, to institute a process, and prefer a libel, in open court, against me. *Surely I would take it upon my shoulder, and bind it as a crown unto me; I would declare unto him the number of my steps, as a prince, would I go near unto him.* So far would I be from approaching him as a criminal, with fear and trembling, that I would advance with all the undauntedness, and firmness, of a prince, who had nothing to fear from him.

Here the whole pleadings, between Job and the three friends, come to a conclusion. All their arguments are exhausted. The matter, in dispute

¹ In hoc cap. Job non ad Dei tribunal provocat: sed cum numine ipso se congregi paratissimum ostendit ad causam suam sustinendam. Dolet interim acerbissime sibi aditum ad Dei ipsius solium penitus denegatum, et preclusum. Schult.

THE INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE. II

between them, rests just where it began. Much altercation and debate, much eloquence and harangue, pass on each side the question, but no determination is made on one side or other. The great point remains still in suspense, whether the appeal, Job had made to God himself, in judgement, would be admitted, and the cause transferred to his tribunal?

Ch. xxxii. xxxiii. xxxiv. xxxv. xxxvi. xxxvii. In this plunge, Elihu, the person, who had hitherto attended to the whole pleadings, and sat silent, interposes. He prefaces his speech, with acquainting Job, that as he expressed himself so utterly dissatisfied with the proceedings against him thus far, by the three friends, and wished so ardently to order his cause before God, and come even to his judgement seat, he himself sat as God's representative in the cause, and would call him to account, in that character. *Behold, I am, to thy wish, in God's stead.*

Thus therefore he accosts him, *If thou canst answer me, set thy words in order before me, stand up, behold I am to thy wish in God's stead, my terror shall not make thee afraid*. The learned Mercier paraphrases the words, "Come on then; suppose me for once to be God; I will act the part of God, and do thou, without fear or reserve, enter the lists with me, as thou wouldst with God." Thus summoned to trial, Elihu takes him to task, and reproves him, over and over again, for that insolent demand of his, to plead his cause before God. In their turn, he reproves the three friends, for the grimace, and hypocrisy, of the part they had acted, and always bespeaks both theirs, and his, attention, by declaring, that he speaks *in God's stead, and in God's behalf*.

Nothing so plain, as that Elihu, throughout his whole speech, charges Job roundly with guilt, and taxes him all the way with insolence, in asserting so confidently his integrity; in daring to appeal to God's tribunal, to justify what could not be justified; in speaking irreverently of God, nay and blasphemously. *For what man is like unto Job, who goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men, who drinketh up scorning like water? For he hath said, it profiteth a man nothing, that he should delight himself with God*. And what reply makes Job to all this? Not a word.

Ch. xxxviii. xxxix. Thus far Elihu had sat judge in the cause, and moderated the pleadings. Now agreeably to Job's wish, and conformably to that assurance, and confidence, which he had expressed, so solemnly, that *his redeemer liveth*, that *he should stand at the latter day upon the earth*, and that *his eyes should see God*; God himself descends to judgement, and accepts the appeal; not to sooth his complaints; not to justify his innocence; not to cherish his confidence; but to convict him of guilt; to chastise his insolence; and to humble him to repentance. Still preserving therefore the form, and figure, of a judicial process, God cites Job once more to the

† Eja age, finge tibi me esse Deum, ejus causam agam, mecum, si potes, ut cum Deo, libere et intrepide congregere. ch. xxxiii. 6.

‡ Ch. xxxii. 9.

bar, to make good his allegations, and defend his innocence. He opens the court with a reproof upon Job, for his evasions and insincerity, in the course of his defense. *Who is this, that darkneth council with words, without understanding?*² The general account, I well know, of this reproof is, that God chastises him for his presumption, in interposing his sentiments about the divine councils. But the words have a strict, and proper, forensic sense, and in that sense, and that only, we should consider them in a work, like this, of a forensic nature.

MAKAS GNETHSAH. *obscurare consilium*. is to *darken*, to *confound*, to *perplex*, an argument, or pleading, either by impertinent suggestions, or tedious harangues, by introducing matter foreign to the argument, or puzzling the cause with little quirks, and evasions. Tully defines it, "involving a cause in darkness, by extenuating, or confounding the cause, with throwing out presumptions of the pleader's own, more or less clear." And a great master of forensic matters calls it, "a suspicious kind of explanation of the business in hand."³ So that the true meaning, and spirit, of the reproof is, "Who is this, that thus artfully, and like some venal orator, is perplexing the cause, and confounding it, with pleadings foreign to the purpose?"

After this severe stricture, upon Job's manner of conducting his defense, God accepts the challenge, he had so oft repeated, and bids him prepare for the trial. *Gird up now thy loins, like a man, for I will, SHAAL, demand of thee*, call thee to account as a criminal, and *do thou*, as thou hast so oft insisted upon it, HANAH, *answer me*; make thy defense in form. It is a mistake; as I have already observed, in Schultens, and the rest of the commentators, to imagine, that *girding up the loins*², is preparing, like a combatant, for battle; it is a metaphor, taken from the manner of collecting the robe round the body, among pleaders and orators, the disposition of which, as may be seen in antient statues, and paintings, gave great grace, and expression, to the speaker. "Prepare thyself therefore, says God, for the pleadings, collect thy robe about thee."

The whole of God's expostulations with Job, turns upon Job's presumption, in pretending to enter into the secrets of providence, and daring to throw himself upon his trial, before the searcher of all hearts, and seeking to maintain, what could not be maintained, his innocence. Omnipotence is the attribute of the Deity, upon which the greatest stress is laid, and his daring to provoke that, and call his justice in question, is the point, which is more particularly insisted upon. God concludes, and waits Job's answer, but not a syllable has he to offer in his defense.

² Ch. xxxviii. 2. ³ *Obscurare litem. tenebras obducere liti, et presumptiones, clariores narrando, aut alias, obscuras facere et extenuare. Cicero.*

Narratio actoris erit gesti negotii suspiciosa explicatio, sparsis omnibus argumentis, obscuratis defensionibus. Defensori autem preteritis, aut obscuratis, suspicionum argumentis, rerum ipsarum erunt eventus casusque narrandi. Budæus Forensia. ² Compare Jerem. i. 17.

Ch. xl. xli. God resumes his expostulations with him, and calls upon him to answer this one question. Whether he thought he had received chastisement enough for all his presumption, at his hands? for so the words should be translated, and not, as they are, *shall he, that contendeth with the Almighty, instruct him*^a? i. e. Hast not thou received, from me, deserved reproof? Have not I convinced thee sufficiently of thy presumption, and folly, who knowest so little of the natural world, and yet pretendest to enter into the secrets of the moral world; who hast dared to call me, in person, to sit in judgement upon thy innocence. *He that reproveth God, let him answer it.* Upon this, Job begins to relent, and disclaims his innocence. *Behold I am vile, what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken, but I will not reply, yea twice, but I will proceed no farther.*

Pausing here a while, God once more demands of him, to produce those mighty proofs of his innocence, which he had so confidently asserted, and set forth those powerful pleadings, which, from the beginning to the end of his defence, he had boasted so much of. He gives him the alternative, he had demanded, ch. xlii., of being plaintiff, or defendant, nay of being judge, in his own cause. *Deck thyself now with majesty and excellency, and array thyself with glory*^b. "Sit in all the pomp and majesty, all the state and glory, of a judge." *Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath, and behold every one that is proud, and abase him.* "Exert the authority of that high office, and silence all that presume to offend thee. *Then will I myself also confess unto thee, that thine own right hand can save thee.*" "I will be content to submit to thine own determination, and if, upon a fair and impartial tryal, thou canst acquit thyself, I will acquit thee."

Ch. xlii. Job, convinced at last, by that magnificent display of God's omnipotence, which runs through the whole of both his, and Elihu's speech, and is indeed the only argument, that convinces him, comes to terms of humiliation, and confession. *I know, that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.* He acknowledges the justice of that first reproof of God's, *Who is this, that darkneth council with words without understanding?* that he is the person, who had all along uttered what he understood not, things, too wonderful for him, which he knew not.

Fairly convicted of guilt, and confidence, in the appeal, which he had made to God's judgement-seat, he takes shame to himself, and gives up, once for all, the whole plea of his innocence, acknowledges the favor, vouchsafed him, of seeing God, the great object of all his wishes, the single point, which he had been laboring throughout his whole tryal. *I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee, wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes.* Upon this, the Lord turneth the captivity of Job, and restores him, round and entire, to all his former fortunes, and friends.

Judge now, if Job, upon this representation of him, in the book which,

^a Ch. xl. 2. Schultens in loc. ^b Ch. xl. 10. ^c Ch. xlii. v. 5. and bears

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bears his name, be the patient, the pious, the perfect character, which we are apt to conceive him; if he be *the perfect, the upright man, one who feared God, and eschewed evil*, which he appears to be, in the two first chapters; if all the learned labor, which has been bestowed, upon his seeing this deliverer of his, proceeds not upon a wrong foundation.

We may call this representation, if we please, a picture of human life, as it has been called, and, without any flattering of the original, it may be so; but surely we shall hardly call it a picture of either patience, or piety. For strip the book of the two first chapters, I would ask the most zealous advocate for him, if he had never heard before of Job's piety, or patience, whether either of these two virtues appear to him striking, or conspicuous? Nay I would go farther, and submit it to him, whether, in that case, he should not have concluded, from his setting out, as he does, that he was blaspheming; from his expostulations, as he goes on, that he was presumptuous; from his querulousness, and peevishness all along, that he was impatient?

The very latest examiners of the part, he acts, see and confess, what they must have winked hard, if they had not seen, great inconsistency in it, and the most determined defenders of him must be happy indeed at distinguishing, if they reconcile all this inconsistency with character. For it will by no means do the business, to produce detached texts, and accumulate, as they are apt to do, passage upon passage, where Job expresses his sentiments, and sublime ones too, upon providence and virtue, for this will readily be allowed them, and is the very circumstance, which makes the inconsistency. But the business is, from this representation of him, to acquit Job of, what God acquits him not, impatience and impiety; to make of him one uniform character; and see, if by any reasonings upon this representation of him, he be, in fact, the patient Job, which we have been taught all along to think him.

If not, then some other principle must be sought for, to elicit any instruction from this representation, or to form any judgement at all upon it. That principle, we say, is the allegory couched under it. The Jews, in their captivity, are the persons shadowed under Job, in his afflictions. 'Tis their impatience, their impiety, their confidence of their innocence, that is exposed in the course of the tryal, and it is their restoration, that is pointed out, in the conclusion, as the effect of Job's repentance.

An indictment is preferred against the Jews, by the three advocates, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar. Job, their proxy, pleads to it, "not guilty." They set out to make good their charge against him; he, to invalidate it. He lavishes all his rhetoric, to defend his client's innocence, and speaks of course the language, they would speak themselves, in their defence; they exert all their eloquence to prove his guilt. Elihu fits, as God's representative in the cause, and moderates the pleadings. At last, God himself as the supreme judge, appealed to all along, takes the matter into his own hands, convicts the defendant of guilt, brings him to confession

fession and repentance; and then exerts the royal prerogative, in granting him a free pardon, and restores him.

This, upon the most attentive review of the book, appears to me to be the disposition of it; for as to the argumentative part, I have nothing farther to add, and set down only to give the reader an insight into the structure and mechanism, not the reasonings of the book, to shew him, that it was not either of the narrative, or historic, but of the forensic kind, that the materials are all of this sort, and the work itself a judicial, or criminal process.

Neither is it difficult to conjecture, whence the sacred author took the hint, of conducting his performance in this shape, when we recollect that repeated demand of the Jews, in their captivity, to plead their own cause, and make good their innocence, in a judicial way, before God. Look into the books of Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, the two prophets, who went into captivity with them, you will see, that the one favorite point, amidst all their murmurings, was to plead their own cause, to dispute, and reason with God, upon the subject of their captivity, to argue with him the equality of his proceedings, and justify their innocence. See through all the prophets the condescension, on God's side, Come now, and *let us reason*, i. e. litigate the point, together. Upon this repeated demand of theirs, copied with great exactness into Job's story, issue is joined with them, in the book before us, in the person of Job, their proxy, and a process in form is instituted against them. Nor indeed could there have been a more effectual method taken, to come at the true state of the case with them. The conviction of Job was then to stand upon fact, and evidence. His acquittal, or condemnation, was to be in the hands of God. The Jews could not but see the justice, and propriety, of so innocent a piece of artifice, and stand convicted by it.

It was the sage advice of Diocles to the Athenian senate, when they were deliberating about putting a person to death, for impiety, without so much as a trial; first to bring him to their bar, and impeach him publicly, not so much for his own sake, as to teach the rest of the citizens reverence. What he counselled, for the benefit of his countrymen, the author of the book of Job practised, for the benefit of the Jews; he puts Job, their representative, upon an open trial, convicts him publicly of guilt, and restores him, by act of meer grace; the one, to teach them the falsity of that plea of theirs, their innocence, the other, to shew them the possibility of their restoration.

Neither is this forensic manner of writing so very strange, and unprecedented, as we are apt to conceive it. A process of exactly the same kind, in miniature, we have pointed out in that vision of Zechariah's, where, under the type of Joshua the high-priest, the whole Jewish nation is impleaded. Joshua stands, as the party accused, before the angel of God, the judge. Satan stands at the right hand of God, the place always of

* Lyfian Orat. 4to. p. 130. ex edit. Cl. Taylor.

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* Lyfæ Orat. 4to. p. 130, ex edit. Cl. Taylor.

the accuser. The angel acquits Joshuah, and the restoration of the Jewish church, under this type, is promised ^a.

St. Paul's epistle to the Romans, addressed, as it is in general, to the judaizing christians, abounds with forensic allusions, and the doctrine, there and elsewhere pursued, of final justification, rests upon the proper notion of a judicial justification, or acquittal at the judgement-seat of God. Indeed the word itself is strictly a forensic one, and our learned Hammond well observes upon it, that it implies a legal proceeding; and therein, a client, a law, and a judge. Thus when a man is said to be justified by the works of the law, Man is supposed the client, impleaded by Satan, the *Ἀσθενος*, accuser; God sits as judge; and the law, by which man is tried, is Moses's. And even thus is the day of judgement represented in scripture. Sin will then be the accuser of the world; Man the client; Christ the mediator; and God the judge ^e.

Upon these principles, the learned Mercier has given the resolution of the whole book of Job ^f, and though we have but few or no records remaining, of the precise forms of judicial causes, or criminal processes, among the jews, there are traces enough left to collect, that they differed not, materially, from those of the rest of the world. The law of Moses was their grand code, and judges were appointed under it, to decide in all causes, both civil and criminal.

The greek orators furnish us with many speeches, in processes of both kinds. In some of them, we find the *Δίκη Ἱεροσυλίας*. *Δίκη Ἀσεβείας*. Causes of sacrilege. Causes of impiety. And though they give us not the minutes of each particular process, yet it is not difficult to trace the places, in each oration, where the indictment was read; the witnesses called; the points argued; the laws cited; the facts proved; and the judgement of the court pronounced. These indeed are so many authentic pieces. But besides these, they had their works of imagination. What the great orators practised in real causes, the later rhetoricians practised in fictitious ones, and what was the proper employ of the former, became an exercise of genius, and stile, in the latter.

Thus, *Τίνας αὖ εἶποι λόγους*, &c. "What would Hercules or Hector; David or Joseph; say, upon such and such occasions? was the common tryal of skill among those writers, and all their business was, to personate the character before them, and put nothing into the mouth of David or Joseph, Hercules or Hector, but what each might be supposed to say, in those circumstances ^g." The experiment succeeded to admiration, and it has been with difficulty, that the artifice was detected, and the several

^a Zech. iii. Diff. p. 278. ^e Hammond's Paraph. Rom. iii. 4. notis. ^f MISHPAT. *judicium*. tria continet. *Initium judicii*, nempe contentionem verborum inter litigatores. *Medium judicii*, nempe pronuntiationem sententiæ. *Finem judicii*, nempe executionem sententiæ. Unde *judicii* nomen, in hoc libro, ad horum unumquodque passim refertur. Hic *initium judicii* significat, nempe forensem inter litigatores contentionem, &c. Mercer in ix. 91. *τίνας αὖ εἶποι λόγους ὁ Ἰωσὴφ ὄντο τῆς Αἰγυπτίας γυναικὸς καὶ ἡγεγενηθείς*. τῆς δ' Ἀβὶδ διακομιστὴς ὄντο τῷ Σαὺλ. Niceph. Bas. Ethop.

speeches found at last to be neither Hercules's, nor Hector's, but the Sophist's.

In Severus Alexandrinus, there are no less than eight of those *Ἠθικαὶ*, and, to mention no more, Libanius hath two folio volumes of declamatory speeches, made all upon fictitious subjects, yet written with an air of great seriousness, and with much attic elegance. In one of them, Demosthenes is brought to the bar, and makes his defense in the senate of Athens. In another, Socrates appears in court, and a defense is made for him. In a third, Menelaus, Ulysses, Achilles, and Patroclus, stand before the council in the trojan camp, and expostulate, each in his turn, the matter of the rape of Helen^a.

These speeches are, all of them, conducted in the solemnity of a judicial trial, and strict propriety of character, before the senate, and it has fared with them, as with the book of Job, that they have had the good luck to be applied, by later writers, as so many genuin speeches, to the several purposes of philology, antiquity, history, and chronology, just as occasion required; nay it is a truth, by this time well known, that even the learned Meursius, in his *Themis Attica*, has cited from them athenian laws and customs, which were never heard of at Athens.

The artifice of those writers was however innocent, and useful, till not content with a competent share of applause, they began to palm upon the world their own compositions, for so many genuin speeches, and availed themselves of them in the mercantile way. Still this shews, that this fictitious manner of writing was of much earlier date, than we are apt to give it credit for, and had both its use, and its merit, in the learned world. And whether those causes, which Budæus, an author of great name in the forensic part of learning, calls *causæ personatæ*, & *adumbratæ*, might not be of this kind, is a question^b.

The dialogue-writing was still more antient; as old as the Socratic school. What think we of those dialogues of the greek, and roman, philosophers, the Phædo, the Timæus, of Plato; the Books of laws, the Tusculan questions of Cicero, where even the most fundamental points of morality are treated in the way of conversation? Little acquainted we must be with those writers, to imagine, that any such conversations were held, and that they are not works of meer imagination^c. Tully fairly gives the reason, why he threw his philosophic works into this form, because it was the old socratic way of arguing against another man's opinion, and the easiest for coming at truth, and therefore he disposes those arguments, just as if the thing was acting, not as if it were telling; and so far these pieces may be considered as dramatical.

^a Libanii *Ἠθικοὶ διατριβαὶ*.

^b *Causæ adumbratæ, et personatæ, sunt quæ litigatoris nomen præferunt, ad quem res non pertinet, nisi quatenus pretio personam agit, quam utendam vero adversario dedit. Budæus. Forensia, p. 95.*

^c Puto fore, ut cum legeris, mirere id nos locutos esse quod nunquam locuti sumus, sed nostri morem dialogorum. Cic. Ep. Fam. ix.

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Mr. Worthington therefore, properly enough, supposes something of this kind of conference between Job, and the three friends; that they had frequent meetings; and discussed several questions of philosophy, in the way of speculative debate; something, I suppose, like the meetings of Cato, Brutus, Crassus, and Tully, at his tusculan seat, that the three friends maintained the pythagorean philosophy, and Job the contrary. I can by no means agree with the learned author, about the philosophy of the disputants, yet some account, like this, of the conference between them, I conceive pretty near the truth, without being liable to that ridiculous representation of his, "of setting up a man of straw, only in order to demolish him;" a representation, as unfriendly to his own hypothesis, as injurious to the ancient dialogue.

It is not difficult, I think, to trace something of this kind of fictitious, or personated character, in St. Paul's writings. His epistle to the Romans, in particular, is hardly intelligible upon any other plan, and his acquaintance with the greek school will account for it. There he sometimes personates the jew, sometimes the gentile; sometimes the regenerate, at others, the unregenerate christian. Now, he speaks as an apostle, then again, *ἀνθρώπων*, after the manner of men. But the most masterly stroke of all is, when he frames his discourse in such an artful manner, as to demonstrate the insufficiency of the jewish law, under color of vindicating it upon jewish principles.

Without this key, there is no coming at his true meaning, in the vii. ch. particularly. And that it is the true one to such parts of his writings, he has hinted to the Corinthians. *These things, brethren, I have, in a figure, transferred to myself, and Apollos, for your sakes.* He had introduced Paul, and Apollos, speaking, as the two heads of two distinct factions among them; not that they were so, or that they spoke so, but in condescension to the Corinthians' conceptions, and to shew them, what language the two factions spoke, and on which side the better of the argument laid. And this personated character of St. Paul it is, that the best commentators, and two of our most judicious paraphrasts, have adopted in the resolution of his epistle to the Romans.

To repeat therefore my own sentiments freely, with regard to the book of Job. I take it to be a piece of the dramatic kind, a work of imagination; artfully contrived, and conducted throughout in personated, allegoric, character. When I call it a work of imagination, it is in the same sense, that the rest of the poetical books of scripture, which have ever been allowed to have the highest claim to inspiration, are so. It must be either the grossest ignorance, or the most extreme perverseness, that puts any less favorable construction upon the words. The whole book of Psalms; that beautiful soliloquy, the Lamentations; some of the sublimest passages in the Prophets;

¹ Lock's, and Taylor's paraphrase.

² Quidam totam hanc dissertationem confusam putant per otium; & de industria, similia invenies apud Aristotelem & philosophos, ubi opiniones variorum afferuntur, qui omnia numerant, quæ de re controversâ sentiri poterant. Mercer. pref. ad Comment. in Lib. Job.

many, even in the historical parts of scripture, are of the same class, thrown into a poetical dress, and disposed in a manner somewhat, though not exactly, dramatical.

Whatever therefore is advanced, in the following sheets, concerning the drama, I shall wish to be understood with some restriction; for, upon a review of the whole, I must confess my self but little solicitous, about the precise notion of it. All I would be thought to contend for is, that, like the mimes, or personated pieces, of early times, like those interludes, scattered here and there in the prophets, in order to have any idea of the nature of the composition, something scenical, and dramatical, must be supposed in the conduct of it; either that it was exhibited in action, or composed at least in such a manner, as representations, thus exhibited, were wont to be; that it is neither history, nor fact; no real conversation, but a fictitious one; and if I might be allowed to call it so, a forensic drama^a.

The reader will comprehend me best, when I refer him to a composition now before me, which rounds my own notion of it, and will contribute to form his; a composition, to which the christian world is greatly indebted, for the vindication of the most material fact in the whole gospel, and of the most fundamental article of the christian faith. It is "The Tryal of the Witnesses of the Resurrection of Jesus;" a work, I apprehend, both of the dramatic and allegoric cast. The business of it is to refute Mr. Woolston's vith Discourse, wherein he had undertaken to expose the miracle of the resurrection of Jesus, or rather indeed to prove it a downright forgery. To set the matter in a proper light, the learned author throws his work into the form of a tryal, at bar, of the twelve apostles, the better to come at the evidence, and state the fact, of the resurrection.

Here we have a court sitting; a judge and jury; council on both sides; witnesses examined; some pleadings over-ruled; others admitted; a fact proved; and sentence, in favor of the twelve apostles, given in form; all the characters, in short, of a genuine tryal, and yet the whole is matter of meer invention. Some centuries hence, this may chance to fall into the hands of some sagacious reader, who may take it, with all these authentic marks about it, for a real tryal; especially when some accident shall have stript it of its introduction, and conclusion, or some enterprizing critick pronounce them spurious, or the work perhaps of some later sophist. It may be adopted, for ought we know, for a piece of real history, and many a learned pen be drawn to authenticate the record.

The main difficulty is, how the putting the patient Job upon the impatient part, could be made, with any tolerable propriety, to answer the end, that we say was proposed by it, the conviction of the impatient jew; for by this time, it will hardly bear a doubt, that his dramatic character is both

^a Diff. p. 275.

impatience and blasphemy? Some account has been given of this matter, in the body of the dissertation^p, and should the reader expect any farther satisfaction, all I can say is, that nothing could expose the folly, and impiety, of impatience more, than exhibiting one of the most patient men living, in all the excess and intemperance of it. Nothing could so effectually confute the absurd reasonings of the abandoned Jew, as putting them all into the mouth of so perfect and upright a man, as Job.

'Tis true, it is taking him out of character. And what then? So is Tully out of character, when, occasionally in his philosophic works, he personates the stoick; when in other parts of his writings, he personates the statesman, or the sophist; when, in his orations, he puts on the advocate. The whole art, and business, of personating such a variety of characters, is to draw forth the sentiments, and speak the language, of the respective parties, and by confuting their opinions, to establish his own. No sensible reader places to Tully's account, what he speaks only in personated character.

In his oration for P. Sylla, he gives the true key to his manner of speaking, as an advocate. Torquatus had charged him with speaking, in Sylla's defense, when he had either declined the defense of the rest of the conspirators, or had spoke with great vehemence against them, and particularly, against Antronius. "If, says he, Torquatus, you fix the character of cruelty for ever on me, because of my behaviour on that occasion, you mistake me greatly. My nature calls for humanity, my country for severity, but neither my nature, nor my country, for cruelty. The personated character, of vehemence and cruelty, which the necessity of the times, and the republick, then laid upon me, my own inclinations, and my nature, have now divested me of. The republick demanded of me, for a while, severity, but my own nature, always, calls for humanity."

Humanity, we see, was Tully's proper character, Job's was patience, yet Tully could be severe, when the exigencies of the times called for severity, as Job might be impatient, when so good an end was answered by it. Both were only advocates, both therefore at liberty to speak in that capacity, which best answered those exigencies. At least, the author of the book of Job has taken no greater freedom with his hero, than Tully took with himself.

^p Difficilis exoritur hoc loco questio, quæ multos torfit. Quomodo Job, qui patientiæ exemplum habetur, ita deinceps in hoc capite, & per totum pene librum, in blasphemias & impias voces prorumpat, ut impatientiæ potius exemplum dici mereatur, si nuda ipsius verba consideres. Alii eum blasphemum, & reprobum plane hominem, quem tandem poenituerit. Talmudici dicunt graviora, se Dei imaginem convellere, ac eum judicio omni, & justitiâ, spoliare. Nos autem mediâ viâ insistere oportet, ut Jobum a peccato omni, & blasphemâ, non excusemus quidem. Itaque verbum, KALAL, maledicere propriè sumimus. Mercer. in ch. iii. Primus actus rarum Dei judicium proponit, & variâ cruce exercet Jobum, ubi primus patientissimus, postea impatientissimus, ostenditur. Mercer Pref. Sunt & confidentiæ verba, & simul impatientiæ, in quâ immodicus est Job. Merc. in ch. xiii. 15.

^p P. 293.

The difficulty is, how, at this distance of time, to come at Tully's real sentiments, in his philosophic works, amidst the variety of characters he speaks in. But difficulty there is none, in the case before us. Job's piety, and patience are sufficiently established, at the first setting out, not to lead us into mistakes about his genuine sentiments. Job, in the prologue, is in proper character, perfect and upright. Job, in the drama, is out of character, blasphemous and impatient. Some end, or other, was most certainly to be answered by such a representation, as this; and that, we say, was to expose the vice of impatience, by placing it in the most ridiculous light, in so patient a man, as Job.

This resolution of the case will be still more intelligible. Suppose a Rechabite introduced upon the stage, to recommend sobriety, you will say of course, the best language, he could speak, were to inculcate that family maxim of Jonadab, his father, "to drink no wine," and that this were acting in proper character. But take him out of character a while, and, in order to expose the vice of intemperance, let him rally, with all the jollity, and gaiety of a downright debauchee, let him laugh at all the antiquated maxims of sobriety. So long as you know him to be a Rechabite, and no debauchee, you cannot easily mistake his meaning, how well soever he acts his part. Temperance will be recommended, because intemperance is exposed in the highest instance possible.

Something there is in human nature, that recoils at such representations, more than at all the lessons of virtue; that feels more exquisitely, the reproof of such pieces of artifice, than of all the grave rebukes of philosophy. What is familiar, and passes unobserved, in a man's self, grows odious and insupportable, when viewed in his picture, where the features are full charged, and every line is drawn in all its deformity.

The known story of the Theſſalian tyrant shews, how quick the operation is of such artifice. He was in the theatre, when the Hecuba of Euripides was acting, and retired precipitately out of it, before the second act. The distress of Hecuba, and Polyxena, drew tears from him, that, he owned, he was ashamed to shed, when he reflected upon the distress, he was daily introducing into families, by butchering so many citizens. The spirit of tyranny could not help relenting, when distress, so grievous, was painted in colors, so natural. The tyrant softened into humanity, but not till inhumanity shewed itself in so detestable a shape.

Nathan's parable, of the Ewe-lamb, proceeds upon the same principles, and was addressed to David, to convict him of the gross injury, he had done to Uriah, the Hittite, by ravishing his wife from his arms. David instantly acknowledges the injury done to the poor man, in the rich man's ravishing his lamb from him; his wrath was kindled against him, and he pronounced immediately, that he ought to be put to death for it. The moment, that Nathan put the parable home to him, he felt the application, and confessed, he had sinned against the Lord.

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I am not fond of interposing any conjectures of mine, in a language, which I pretend not to any critical experience in, and have referred the reader therefore, all along, to better authority. But he must indulge me in one, which appears to me not unfavorable to the notion, inculcated in the following sheets, that this book admits not of any date, earlier than the Babylonish captivity; for as to the author of it, that is, and must be matter of meer conjecture.

Mention is made, Ch. ix. 25. of *posts*. *My days are swifter than a post*. Now certain it is, that the very first appointment, in the east, of public posts; their stages; their offices; their messengers; and their horses; was by Cyrus, and Xenophon gives us the whole detail of their original establishment. The first time we hear of them, in scripture, is Hezekiah's sending *posts* from Dan to Beer-sheba, to give notice, through all the land of Israel, of his celebrating the feast of the pass-over.

That the books of Chronicles were written after the captivity, is now hardly doubted. But the book of Job is thought to have pretensions to a date, a full thousand years higher. Yet mention is made in it of *posts*, and in no other book of scripture, that I can find, earlier than the captivity. RATS, the original word, I very well know, signifies strictly, *cursor*, a running footman; but look into the book of Esther, written, no doubt, after the captivity, you will find the, RATSIM, *posts*, mounted on horse-back, on dromedaries, on mules, and on camels, dispatched by king Ahasuerus, with letters to the lieutenants of the provinces, for the quicker proclamation of his royal decree †.

If we reflect then upon the expedition, with which, expresses thus dispatched, thus regularly conducted by set stages, and relays of horses at each stage, as Xenophon describes them, must move, the image, here in Job, will not only be intelligible, which it would hardly otherwise be, but beautiful, and apposite. For whatever was the convenience, or security, of letters sent by foot-messengers, surely dispatch and expedition were no part of their recommendation. It was to remedy their inconvenience, that Cyrus first invented the use of post-horses, and the fleetness, of such expresses, gives us a very high idea of that hurry, and rapidity, with which Job's days flew, as it were, from him. *They are swifter than a post; they fly away; they are passed away, as the swift ships; as the eagle, that hasteth to the prey*. Xenophon tells us, that the expedition of the posts was such, that it was held to be quicker than the flight of cranes.

We should surely think it no unfair presumption, of the existence of an english author, after the RESTORATION, who speaks of the public posts in this kingdom, and an eastern author therefore, who mentions them in that part of the world, may well be suspected to have lived after the CAPTIVITY. But I undertake not to fix the precise date of the book of Job, from this circumstance. All I contend for is, that it seems not to have the pretensions, that the world is fond of giving it, to any higher date.

† 2 Chr. xxx. 6.

† Esth. viii. 10.

|| Xenoph. Cyr. Paed. L. H.